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Not So Secret Science

"The life of spies is to know, not to be known," George Herbert wrote in 1640, and for over 300 years it held true—with some notable exceptions, most of whom made the mistake of being caught and executed. But as the Cold War has become more and more an accepted fact of life, so has spying, and so have the men who ply this distasteful craft. As a result we find the Russians honoring their spy Col. Rudolf Abel on a television program; the New York *Herald Tribune* reports U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers has been given a secret medal with a secret citation in a secret ceremony by the CIA; and former CIA executives Allen Dulles and Richard Bissell recently discussed and firmly defended "the science of spying" on a network television program.

According to John Chancellor, narrator of the program, spying now means "using tanks and planes and men to promote our policies and sometimes to overthrow governments which we don't like." To illustrate the point, a former U.S. air attache to Guatemala told of becoming party to a plot to hire gangsters to kill or assassinate Communists there, and a British freighter was said to have been accidentally sunk by a CIA plane. These and other incidents are ascribed abroad to the U.S.A.; within the United States, if they become known, they are ascribed to the CIA. Yet Allen Dulles says "at no time has the CIA engaged in any political activity or intelligence that was not approved at the highest level." And Richard Bissell more pointedly adds: "I have long felt that many of the criticisms that are leveled at this one agency of government are in fact the criticisms of those who hate to admit to themselves or anyone else that power must sometimes be used."

If it is an "invisible government" that is wielding this power, the visible government—the Congress—must certainly carry a heavy share of the blame. Congressmen, it seems, "don't want to know" what the CIA is doing. Such a head-in-the-sand attitude may protect an individual conscience or reputation, but claims of ignorance do little to preserve the United States' reputation abroad when the CIA is implicated in plots or coups. With Communist pressure upon the Free World showing no signs of slackening, with Congress exercising less influence upon foreign policy and with continued erosion of the assumption that "we don't do that kind of thing," it is more urgent than ever that Congress implement the 1956 Hoover Commission recommendation by establishing a

Joint Committee on Intelligence

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Letters to the Editor

Science of Spying

I never thought it would take television to stir me out of complacency, but NBC did just that on May 4 with its program *The Science of Spying*. I am shocked and dismayed at the revelations made (through interviews with two past CIA officials) about our espionage activities over the past 15 years, especially in Guatemala. It is difficult not to become emotional over every part of this program; what it all boiled down to, and what I was amazed to hear these men in power state with such calm, is simply that if we hope to win our struggle against communism, we must do what the Communists do, only better if we possibly can. My only real disappointment was the interviewer did not ask Mr. Allen Dulles if such a victory would be worth much; but that is beside the point.

My main feeling is one of disappointment, that *The Washington Post* has not published these facts. It is surely the function of a newspaper to inform the public; and if our Government is engaged in immoral actions the public should be made aware of it. If television can explore and report on the CIA, then a paper such as *The Post* should have done so long ago. You editorialize often on the need for an informed public—I resent not having been informed of this before.

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